

Common Name (Park-specific): **Old Field (Wet Meadow subtype)**

SYNONYMS

NVC English Name: Steeplebush - Blackberry species / Reed Canarygrass Shrubland
NVC Scientific Name: *Spiraea tomentosa* - *Rubus* spp. / *Phalaris arundinacea* Shrubland
NVC Identifier: CEG006571

LOCAL INFORMATION

Environmental Description: This type occurs in low-lying sections of the lakebed of former Lake Conemaugh. These low-lying areas of the old field may be saturated for part of the year. The available surface water greatly influences the species composition of this subtype. These fields have not been farmed since the breach of the dam; however, they are still actively managed by the park resource managers.

Vegetation Description: In the Wet Meadow subtype, wrinkleleaf goldenrod (*Solidago rugosa*) is often dominant, with hydrophytic species as associates, such as arrowleaf tearthumb (*Polygonum sagittatum*), sedges (*Carex scoparia*, *C. lurida*, *C. vulpinoidea*), purplestem aster (*Symphyotrichum puniceum* var. *puniceum*), rice cutgrass (*Leersia oryzoides*), spikerush (*Eleocharis* spp.), common rush (*Juncus effusus*), hardstem bulrush (*Schoenoplectus acutus* var. *acutus*), creeping bentgrass (*Agrostis stolonifera*), and rough bentgrass (*Agrostis scabra*). Broadleaf cattail (*Typha latifolia*) may also be present in occasional patches. Big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*), little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), and switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*) are prevalent throughout the former lakebed as a result of restoration plantings. Other upland species such as deertongue (*Dichanthelium clandestinum*) and flat-top goldentop (*Euthamia graminifolia*) typically found in the herbaceous subtype may also be common in the wet meadow subtype. Invasive species such as purple crownvetch (*Coronilla varia*) and reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) often make up a large component of the herbaceous layer. Willows (*Salix* spp.), alders (*Alnus* spp.), Allegheny blackberry (*Rubus allegheniensis*), and Morrow's honeysuckle (*Lonicera morrowii*) often occur in dense small patches within the wet meadow subtype.

Most Abundant Species:

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Lifeform</u>	<u>Species</u>
Short shrub/sapling	Broad-leaved deciduous shrub	<i>Salix</i> spp., <i>Alnus</i> spp., <i>Rubus allegheniensis</i> , <i>Lonicera morrowii</i>
Herb (field)	Graminoid	<i>Carex</i> spp., <i>Leersia oryzoides</i> , <i>Eleocharis</i> spp.
Herb (field)	Forb	<i>Solidago rugosa</i> , <i>Polygonum sagittatum</i> , <i>Aster puniceus</i>

Characteristic Species: *Solidago rugosa*, *Polygonum sagittatum*, *Aster puniceus*, *Carex* spp., *Leersia oryzoides*, *Eleocharis* spp.

Other Noteworthy Species: Information not available.

Local Range: This vegetation type occurs in low-lying areas of the lakebed of former Lake Conemaugh.

Classification Comments: The vegetation structure and species composition of the old fields in Johnstown Flood vary widely. The structure and composition of the old fields are influenced by past land use, current management prescriptions, and hydrology. The old field vegetation can be

divided into three subtypes: Herbaceous, Wet Meadow and Crataegus subtypes. Within one mapped old field polygon, multiple subtypes can be present. The boundaries and distinctions between these subtypes may not be definitive in the field.

Other Comments: None.

Local Description Authors: S.J. Perles (PNHP).

Plots: JOFL.8; AA Points 8, 11, 14.

GLOBAL INFORMATION

NVC CLASSIFICATION

Physiognomic Class	Shrubland (III)
Physiognomic Subclass	Deciduous shrubland (III.B.)
Physiognomic Group	Cold-deciduous shrubland (III.B.2.)
Physiognomic Subgroup	Natural/Semi-natural cold-deciduous shrubland (III.B.2.N.)
Formation	Seasonally flooded cold-deciduous shrubland (III.B.2.N.e.)
Alliance	<i>Spiraea tomentosa</i> - <i>Rubus</i> spp. Seasonally Flooded Shrubland Alliance (A.3022)
Alliance (English name)	Steeplebush - Blackberry species Seasonally Flooded Shrubland Alliance
Association	<i>Spiraea tomentosa</i> - <i>Rubus</i> spp. / <i>Phalaris arundinacea</i> Shrubland
Association (English name)	Steeplebush - Blackberry species / Reed Canarygrass Shrubland
Ecological System(s):	Information not available

GLOBAL DESCRIPTION

Concept Summary: This wet meadow vegetation of the northeastern states occurs in a variety of settings, most frequently in low-lying areas of old fields or pastures, or beaver-impacted wetlands. The physiognomy is complex and variable, ranging from shrub thicket to herbaceous meadow with scattered shrubs. Shrub species usually include *Spiraea tomentosa*, *Spiraea alba* var. *alba*, *Rubus allegheniensis*, *Rubus hispidus*, *Lonicera morrowii*, *Salix* spp., and others. *Hypericum densiflorum* often occurs in the Central Appalachians. Associated herbaceous species are also variable in composition, depending on land-use history. Usually seen are *Phalaris arundinacea*, *Solidago rugosa*, *Solidago canadensis*, *Juncus effusus*, *Scirpus cyperinus*, *Leersia oryzoides*, *Carex scoparia*, *Carex folliculata*, *Carex lurida*, *Carex lupulina*, *Carex vulpinoidea*, *Vernonia noveboracensis*, *Eupatorium maculatum*, *Eleocharis* spp., and others.

Environmental Description: This wet meadow vegetation of the northeastern states occurs in a variety of settings, most frequently in low-lying areas of old fields or pastures, or beaver-impacted wetlands.

Vegetation Description: The physiognomy is complex and variable, ranging from shrub thicket to herbaceous meadow with scattered shrubs. Shrub species usually include *Spiraea tomentosa*, *Spiraea alba* var. *alba*, *Rubus allegheniensis*, *Rubus hispidus*, *Lonicera morrowii*, *Salix* spp., and others. *Hypericum densiflorum* often occurs in the Central Appalachians. Associated herbaceous species are also variable in composition, depending on land-use history. Usually seen are *Phalaris arundinacea*, *Solidago rugosa*, *Solidago canadensis*, *Juncus effusus*, *Scirpus cyperinus*, *Leersia oryzoides*, *Carex scoparia*, *Carex folliculata*, *Carex lurida*, *Carex lupulina*, *Carex vulpinoidea*, *Vernonia noveboracensis*, *Eupatorium maculatum*, *Eleocharis* spp., and others.

Most Abundant Species: Information not available.

Characteristic Species: Information not available.

Other Noteworthy Species: Information not available.

USFWS Wetland System: Information not available.

DISTRIBUTION

Range: Although this vegetation is widespread, its range has not been evaluated. It is known from the Central Appalachian ecoregion and the Lower New England / Northern Piedmont ecoregions, and is likely in others.

States/Provinces: NJ.

Federal Lands: NPS (Johnstown Flood); USFWS (Great Swamp).

CONSERVATION STATUS

Rank: GNR (8-Jul-1999).

Reasons: Information not available.

CLASSIFICATION INFORMATION

Status: Standard.

Confidence: 2 – Moderate.

Comments: Information not available.

Similar Associations: Information not available.

Related Concepts: Information not available.

SOURCES

Description Authors: L.A. Sneddon.

References: Decker 1955, Eastern Ecology Working Group n.d., NatureServe and Russell 2003.



Figure 15. Wet Meadow subtype of Old Field vegetation at Johnstown Flood National Memorial (plot JOFL.8). July 2004. NAD 1983 / UTM easting 688923, northing 4468127.